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ABSTRACT

This report of the University of South Florida Consulting Team to the Tampa Model Cities Agency focuses on the desperate need for better education for Tampa citizens. Traditional structuring of curricula is rejected and the provision of choices for selection of learning experiences by the learner is proposed. The burden of responsibility is placed on the learner in the kind of open educational system envisaged therein. A guidance system where teachers, community people, and professional guidance personnel would participate and cooperate would lead to self-direction in learning. The aim of this type of curriculum is to put the Model Neighborhood resident into a series of life situations that will constitute quality education. Education will thus have to be carried out in nonschool settings within the community where work will not be contrived but real. Relating to teacher education problems, the University of South Florida is delegated with identification of problems and production of capable teachers. Physical facilities for education is thought of in terms of a centrally located megastructure provided with space for every imaginable facility. The activities of the education and health component are considered to be worthy of consolidation in this structure. (RJ)

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# EDUCATION AS LIFE IN ALL OF ITS ASPECTS-- THE GREATEST NEED OF THE TAMPA INNER-CITY

(Final report of the University of South Florida Consulting Team to the Educational Component of the Tampa Model Cities Agency. Members of the consulting team: Jean A. Battle (chairman), William Benjamin, Joseph Bondi, L. D. DuBois, Donald Jaeschke, V. Miller Newton, III, Roger Nichols and Robert Shannon)

"...cities are the only source of inspiration for a new, truly modern art... The living language of our time, born spontaneously and naturally in accord with its spirit, is the language of urbanism... The city, incessantly moving and roaring outside our doors and windows, is an immense introduction to the life of each of us."

--Boris Pasternak in Dr. Zhivago

If it is believed that the purpose of education is to enhance the quality of life, as the consultants listed above believe it to be, then the purpose of education has to be conceived quite differently than it has been conceived in the past. To enhance the quality of life, education would no longer strive to mold students to fit the needs of the organization but instead the organization would be shaped to fit the needs of students.

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To change the direction of any long-established organization to such relevant goals as meeting the life-giving needs of those it is supposed to serve is a formidable task. To change the direction of the educational organization - which must be done if it is not to wither away - is the most formidable of tasks since its leaders have always tried to hold their organization aloof from the turbulence of life that roared outside its windows and doors.

As long ago as the 1880's James Bryce insisted that city government in the United States represents "the one conspicuous failure" of the American democracy.* For certain, the American city has not improved itself since the great British historian, Bryce, visited our shores and gathered his material for his classic work, The American Commonwealth. While education is the brightest hope for democracy to succeed, contemporary educators are constantly trying to keep the educational institutions isolated from the heart-beat of democracy, which is political, social and economic life.

Education like politics is concerned with the art of the possible. It is not possible for urban education to become real and vital unless it relates itself to the political, economic, and social life of the city. If this life-centered education cannot be offered by our present educational institution it will have to be offered by some other agency in the American city, or else the city will die.

The Tampa inner-city is not in need of more scholarly studies of its needs, as important as they can be, but it is in desperate need of better education for its citizens, more money for its public and private sectors and better ideas for spending the money. Much more public money than is now being spent, and is even being contemplated, is desperately needed for schools, police, courts, parks, playgrounds, museums, sanitation, transportation and public festivals. In addition, more private money is needed for coffee shops, cafes, industries, theatres, homes, department stores and bookstores. And all such facilities and the activities that go on within them must be considered as vital parts of the

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*James Bryce, The American Commonwealth, 3rd ed. rev. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1903), 2 Vols.

total educational enterprise. This means defining education as life in all of its aspects.

## Curriculum as a People-to-People Process in the Model City

Experience with curriculum and teaching indicate that the way in which curriculum is structured seems to have little to do with the quality of an individual's education. If this were not the case, then there would not be the tremendous disparity in learning among individuals which is evident at all levels of education, both in the "advantaged" and "disadvantaged" communities. This appears to be accounted for by the idea that no matter how a curriculum is structured it is bound to make less sense to some learners than to others.

Learning, in other words, seems to be a function of the spirit in which the learner learns and in which the teacher teaches rather than of the content of the curriculum, itself. In this sense, curriculum would better be viewed as a people-to-people thing rather than as a relation of students to subject matter.

It is, therefore, the opinion of the Model Cities Education Consulting Team that what is needed is not a restructured curriculum to be imposed on all learners in the Model Neighborhood Area but an organizational plan within which people can relate more effectively to people; where the aims of an individual's education can be negotiated by the learner and the educational system.

## Education is a Lifelong Process

People who are labelled "disadvantaged" are so labelled not particularly because they are academically ignorant but because they have a life style that forces them to exist on an economic and social level markedly "lower" than that

of the nondisadvantaged. To be ignorant of much of the content of schooling is, in fact, not much of a handicap to an individual in this country. To live from day to day, to demand instant gratification, to refuse to learn social niceties or to be late to work can be handicapping. Life style is not learned once and retained, it is a continually developing thing that changes with the hopes, conditions and motivations of an individual.

If education is to have any considerable impact on the life style of the disadvantaged people of the inner-city of Tampa, it must be a lifelong and all-encompassing process. It must be part of the experience of every person in the area from the time of infancy through old age so that through education the residents may find in themselves the abilities they need to better themselves.

## Learning is "Organized Confusion"

It is proposed that the curriculum be structured as a field of choices from which learners may select learning experiences. In this way, learners could engage in activities that they perceive as meaningful and spend their time actually learning that which they are intrinsically motivated to learn. Under these circumstances, education becomes a thing that is negotiable between the teacher and the taught. It ceases to be something inflicted on unwilling students; the teacher ceases to be charged with a police or holding action.

In the "organized confusion" approach to education the Model Neighborhood resident would have the opportunity to use the educational establishment to meet certain of his specific needs:

1. The need for personal development, identification and life enrichment. Experiences in this area could range from playing with manipulative toys for preschool-aged children to community study for preadolescents to the study of music for young adults. Experiences in this category would allow an individual to answer the questions, "What kind of person am I?" "What am I good at?" "What are my values?"

2. The need to understand, to develop empathy for and to relate to other people. Experiences in this area could range from making the transition from parallel to cooperative play for preschoolers to doing a construction project for older children to working on a community improvement project for teenagers.

3. The need to understand and to be able to exercise a measure of control over one's environment. Experiences in this area would cover the understanding and manipulation of both natural and social environments and would be characterized by any types of experiences involving study and solution of environmental or community relations problems.

4. The need to become capable of establishing economic independence and indentification with the world of work. This area would be of increasing interest to older learners who would be approaching school-leaving age as well as the underemployed or unemployed persons who had already left school.

The above four basic need areas obviously do not comprise specific subjects in the curriculum. They represent, instead, motivations that learners might have for studying any number of topics offered by the education system. One learner studies reading in order to increase his capability of gaining employment while another studies reading to enrich his personal life. One learner uses the study of the local political structure to increase his control over his environment while another learns mathematics to reach the same goal. And it is not important that all learners engage in a learning experience for the same reasons. What is important is that each learner have a definite goal which he can articulate for being involved in any learning experience.

If the educational system is to serve people's needs as the needs arise, learning experiences must be less rigidly structured and scheduled than they now are. Instruction must be ongoing and always available; something that is always there and open to those who select it.

## The Direction of Learning is Self-Enforced

In an open educational system of the kind proposed herein, the burden of responsibility falls on the learner. If he refuses to take the responsibility for putting himself into learning experiences he will obviously not benefit from the instruction offered by the education system.

While people generally tend to be curious and willing to learn, much of the experience of disadvantaged individuals tends to make them wary, cynical or rejective of learning opportunities. To them school situations are often seen as punitive and unrewarding. Negative self-images brought about by the society in general are often reinforced by school experiences to the point where the disadvantaged person may view himself as incapable of learning many things.

The key to overcoming these negative influences and getting residents of the Model Neighborhood Area to accept responsibility for directing their own pursuits of learning lies in an effective guidance system. By systematic examination of one's own motivations, aspirations, attitudes and values one can become capable of self-direction in learning.

Such a guidance system would need one basic ingredient: the learner would have to have a person or persons with whom he could develop a long-term, continuing personal relationship -- someone to whom he could always go for help and encouragement in making decisions. Such persons would probably fall into three categories:

1. Teachers. Learners tend to select teachers as sources of help and information due to the great amount of contact that students have with teachers in the normal course of events. Teachers would have to be oriented strongly toward this function as part of their role.

2. Community people. In many neighborhoods there are citizens who have a great deal of credibility with their neighbors. These people are established, know persons in key positions, and are quite accessible to persons seeking help or advice. They may be business people,

workers or housewives. They may have little or much education. Persons of this sort should be sought out and oriented to acting as community counselors on a regular basis. They should not be removed from their present status or handled by the establishment in any way as to decrease their credibility with their public.

3. Professional guidance workers. While professional counselors would probably not be likely to develop close relationships with as many individuals as teachers and community counselors, they would still fulfill a vital role in being technically able to help individuals gain self-insights of the sort requiring higher level professional competence.

Hopefully, such a guidance system could reach the point of helping and even requiring Model Neighborhood residents to chart their own educational course.

## Education is Work

If education is to be seen as a lifelong process carried out not in isolation from the community but with the community as the classroom, then the relationship of life to education becomes important. The aim of the present curriculum is to put the Model Neighborhood resident into a series of life situations that will constitute quality education.

Under these circumstances work as education becomes a central issue. In this context work is not conceived of in the narrow sense of employment for pay. It is seen in the broader sense as being composed of three ingredients:

1. Production
2. Art or creative expression
3. Fun

Work, when properly conceived, is the link which binds man to man and man to nature. An individual is, in other words, what he produces, what he creates and what he enjoys. Education for the disadvantaged person has, unfortunately, been far from productive, never creative and seldom fun. It has been drudgery but never work and so it has not given him the capability of relating either to man or to nature.

In order to do work as thus conceived, the participant must think about what he is doing, be active and producing; the thinking processes will make him discriminate between play and drudgery, between art, facsimile and distaste, between creation, routine production and desecration. When he cannot change things internally, he may find other situations where he can express himself while he constructs a better option, or he may quit forthwith. He is becoming free, because his mind is setting him free.

These suggestions are deliberately void of phrases such as Vocational Education, Career Planning, Occupational Exploration, etc. The island of excellence which will be created in the Model Cities area of Tampa begins first as an island within the mind of the man. The traditional vocational programs, people, and approaches are too narrow to apply here. In the proposed curriculum there is no vocational education as opposed to general education. All education is work and is at once vocational and liberal.

## The Nonschool School

The present proposal sets the stage for an education system open to all in which the learner selects his own course of study; a system in which education is work (broadly conceived) and in which learning is drawn from life rather than being apart from life. These conditions suggest that to retain the school building as the focal point of education would be to violate this new conception of education. Education will have to be carried out in nonschool settings located within the community where work will not be contrived but real. The proposed system will also have to contain a mechanism for carrying out the change that is needed in any matter relating to the needs of people and that is usually stifled by the bureaucracy of the traditional school system.

What is suggested is the idea of a group of expeditors of educational innovation. This group might be referred to as the mobile education squad.

The mobile education squad would be a team of people from the University and the school system who have the personality pattern of innovation. Its job would be to move among the schools and educational projects and by observation and interview to locate those teachers and administrators with innovative ideas. Once such a person is located, the squad would serve as a task force to assist that person in setting up a teaching project. They would have blanket power to locate facilities, to requisition personnel, and to authorize funds within a pre-set budget. The squad would review each project to reinforce its innovational nature and to assess its impact on the educational needs of the people it serves.

## Education Belongs to People

The proposed curriculum is for the Model Neighborhood Area and is suggested in response to the needs of the people of that area. It should not be overlooked that the other neighborhoods of Hillsborough County have just as distinct educational needs which are not being met by the existing system. Some of the needs of other areas are different according to the values and aspirations of the residents. At any rate it is becoming obvious that one identical educational system cannot long continue to serve such a variety of demands.

Much of what would be accomplished by implementation of the foregoing recommendations whether in substance or method is almost certain to be of interest to communities outside the Model Neighborhood Area. Provisions for such "spin-off"

from the Model Cities education project should be attended to in future educational planning for Hillsborough County.

## TEACHER EDUCATION FOR MODEL CITY

If education for life is to be the mode and style for model city then teacher education must take on a dimension completely bereft of anything of the past. Indeed, the cause of the need for model city projects might well be placed, at least in some measure, at the doorstep of the school as a co-partner in the growth and development of adequate human beings who are capable of meeting the challenges of a world of complexity. Education for total citizens of tomorrow, citizens who are capable of perpetuating modelness, cannot be harnessed to what exists today or for that matter the today (educational practices) which is commonly equated with yesterday of 60 years ago.

The education of teachers for the tasks of modelness of model city might well begin with a diagnosis that underlies the reason for each designated task. For too long we have assumed that teacher talent was available for all diagnosed tasks. Teacher talent evolved from an antiquated practice while the identified task requiring teacher-pupil attention emanated from the here and now of living in the present generation. Courses for re-certification, for in service, for promotion and for advancement, too often are in no way related to that which must be done. Model cities teacher training must of necessity negate certification requirements, pay, advancement courses, indeed, courses as such and take on the character of what is needed to accomplish that which is identified now.

At present, college of education students of the University of South Florida are in large numbers in the existing school structural pattern. This

is in no way to be diminished, for the remedial benefit is all too significant. However, as student need for laboratory experiences increases, the College of Education and the Educational Component of model cities must consider ways for these young people, dedicated to becoming teachers, to try their talents with children as young as one year old or as adult as the oldest of the aged. Our teachers need to study the young, the needs of the young, the adolescent, the young adult, and the aged if they are to come to know themselves. They must know where they relate best. We cannot afford to missuse talent.

We need to discover ways in which our teachers to be can become immersed in the existing culture of the model cities area without becoming absorbed by that culture for we may assume that model cities project suggests a rising above or perhaps an enriching of that which is.

We must understand that we can diagnose and prescribe to cure that which is; however, our task seems greater in that we must diagnose and prevent. A new breed of teacher, trained by a wholly new process, seems to offer possibilities. The University of South Florida College of Education, since it is already involved and geographically immersed in model cities and the model cities personnel responsible for education, can identify problems and produce teachers who are problem solvers equal to the tasks.

## Physical Facilities for a Model Educational Program

If physical facilities for education are to be of a model nature they must be built upon a concept that emphasizes people rather than only brick and mortar. In this concept the form of the facilities will be guided by a truly people-oriented educational function in which the teaching of life in all of

of its aspects is the rationale for the design. When the design is being conceived it is most imperative that the form of the facilities follow the educational function because after the building is completed the educational function is somewhat molded to the form of the facilities.

Recreating the Model Cities area of Tampa so that it becomes a genuine model city for a minimum of 33,000 people is a dream that is possible to be made into reality. It will not be made into reality, however, unless those who are responsible for the formal education of the citizens of the area are willing to dream and then are willing to put in the economic, social and intellectual resources necessary to make this dream come true.

To achieve genuine modelness, in the Tampa inner-city, it is necessary to identify education as being central to inner-city life. By so doing, it will be acknowledged that modelness means total immersion of the citizenry in life that is educationally relevant. In this concept of education the individual experiences from conception to death, a life in which his total surrounding focuses on his total development and the development of his fellow inhabitants. School in the conventional sense, therefore, disappears. It is replaced by a community and life style that is perpetually educational in every dimension. The individual discovers beauty because he is immersed in it and he learns about successful human relations by living in a community where the daily demonstration is excellence in human relations.

The person living in a model urban area will be able to see the artist in residence on the street corner, in the park, and in the neighborhood store. The arts will be so prevalent and so convenient in his community that he cannot avoid contacting and assimilating the ideas that enhance his life from the

world of music, dance, drama, painting, and sculpture. The model neighborhood acknowledges life as education, the culture as life, and education as occurring in the entire community as well as the entire world.

Within the model urban neighborhood it will be necessary to create some various types of structures deliberately fashioned to contain and encourage a model type of education, which means great many highly specialized physical facilities. Since modelness of an ideal type is the only palatable end product, it must be accepted that there are few existing facilities of a school sort now available in the Model Cities neighborhood. Most existing school buildings must be eliminated. Most of them do violence to the entire concept of modelness as a life of education.

To make this model life operate in the model community, certain basic conceptual notions must be realized in creating physical arrangements. These key concepts include:

1) Access - Literally and figuratively every space in the model urban area must be a space for education.
2) A literal linkage of the public spaces by melting them together through carefully planned ties with the free enterprise system--- parks, walkways, malls, symposium settings, occupational arrangements, art centers, and even formal instructional settings.
3) Amenity areas will be integral elements of the education setting. These will be frequent and casual places where persons can gather in small groups for conversation, eating, reading, listening or thinking.
4) A magnetic beckoning quality characterizing the physical arrangements can be accomplished through exterior design, interior design, and furnishings of school buildings. Modelness in education will mean the

disappearance of desks replaced by more functional furnishings. The buildings or other places in the model city area likewise should be constructed with a threat-free character that invites and retains populations of all ages.

5) In the school alterable space is essential. Fixed equipment and furnishings, as well as walls will be minimal. Soft colorful vision barriers should predominate.

6) Physical construction should include many arrangements for the use of visuals or every sort, including electronic visuals and the more traditional art objects. For example, Times Square in New York City is a center for education night and day. Some of the education is of a negative nature, much of it is positive. The Model Cities neighborhood must deliberately construct physical facilities that are positive.

7) The "Educational Spine" concept of the Model City area can become the basic consideration for creation of physical facilities. An uninterrupted flow of education environments will be the Model Cities education setting.

Physical facilities deliberately designed for education in the model neighborhood must invite, retain, and complement people. They must be warm and beckoning. They must be entirely threat-free. They must be useful 24 hours a day, seven days a week by all age groups.

A centrally located megastructure could become the solution for the primary educational physical facility. If it is constructed it must become the launch pad and headquarters building for an endless array of educational activities through electronics, television equipment, computer facilities,

photography, audio taping equipment, radio, and programmed instruction gadgetry. Space for administrative necessities and clinical work could be handled in the megastructure as well as space for large and small group meetings. The activities of the education and health component might be consolidated in this structure.

These suggestions are deliberately brief. They describe a style for living the education life. Once educational programs are tentatively fashioned, physical arrangements will emerge that give literal substance to the dream. It is essential to sustain the idea that the city is education. The obligation is to make it model in the most humane patterns.

Recreating the Model City area of Tampa so that it becomes a genuine model urban area for a minimum of 33,000 people is a feasible and a practical dream. The time to begin making the dream into reality is not tomorrow, but today. For this to be done education must lead the way.